Numb. 70.

The Female Tatler.

Written by a Society of Ladies.

Non ego ventoſæ plebis Suffragia venor. Horace.

From **Wednesday** December 14, to **Friday** December 16, 1709.

Artesia's Day.

LUCINDA told you in her laſt, how different the Opinions of the Ladies were, touching the Precedence among the Female Virtues. After every one had extoll'd, what according to her own Inclinations ſhe thought moſt Praiſe-Worthy, a Gentleman of the Gown told the Company, that ſeeing ſeveral Ladies that had been favour'd by the *Muſes*, he wonder'd none of them ſhould ſpeak in behalf of Learning, for indeed there is, ſaid he, no Branch of it in which Women have not excell'd as much as Men: *Hyppecauſtria* was *Minerva*'s Prieſt, *Mera* was the ſame to *Venus*, and *Sphigenia* to *Diana*; nay, a Woman has arrived to the Papal Dignity, as *Agrippa* will own, who was a Learned Man, and a profeſs'd Papiſt: Wou'd you forget the great Female Philoſopher *Thæna*, the Wife of *Pythagoras*, or his Daughter *Dama*, that was ſo famous for expounding her Father's Principles? *Themiſtes* was admir'd for her Learning by *Lactantius*, St *Catherine* in Poetry and Oratory, both out ſtript moſt of the great Men of her Time; and if you'll take in *Androgenia*, *Valeria*, *Sempronia*, and all the Women that have been renowned upon the account of Letters, you may fill a larger Table than *Weſtminſter-Hall* can hold; I wiſh I could once ſee you about it: As to the Imputation of Copying after Mr *Bickerſtaff*, which I heard a Lady mention, you are clear'd from it by the *Hebrew*; for tho the Vulgar would derive the Name of the firſt Woman in that Language from *Chauva*'s Life; yet the moſt refin'd Wits among the *Rabbines* will tell you, that it proceeds from *Chiva*, which ſignifies to Tattle; which may ſerve for an undeniable Proof, that the *Female Tatlers* were extant ſome Thouſands of Years before the Family of the *Bickerſtaffs* was ever thought of. This nettled moſt of the Company, and ſome body having told the Perſon, that if he could make no better uſe of his *Hebrew*, he might as well have left it at *Cambridge*, whence he had it, as brought it among the Women to Ridicule the Sex. *Lucinda* reſumed the Diſcourſe concerning the Difficulties ſhe foreſaw in the compoſing of a Table of *Fame*, not only, ſaid ſhe, as to the Rank of Virtues, but likewiſe the placing of the Worthies themſelves; there are Favourites of *Fame* as well as of *Fortune*: The generallity of People call thoſe the moſt famous, that have made the greateſt Noiſe in the World, but I would be more juſt, and making a Difference between the Book and the Table of *Fame*, without Regard to the Figure you make in the firſt, never place them at the latter, but according to their Deſerts. Whoever deſigns the Benefit of Mankind, muſt never make any one his Hero, whom he cannot recommend as a Pattern for others to imitate, at leaſt in thoſe good Qualities for which he extoll'd him: As for Example, if you ask who was the moſt famous General, and the greateſt Warrior in the World, every body will tell you *Alexander*, the Name he has without doubt: Now let us ſee how well he deſerves the Character. *Alexander* the *Macedonian*, had an undaunted Courage, to ſurmount as well as undertake the greateſt Difficulties, and a vaſt Genius to Command: Theſe are two very neceſſary, but not the only Qualifications, that are requiſite to make a Man the greateſt General. In the firſt place, he had not Prudence enough to be a Collonel of Foot in a Modern Army; in the ſecond, he Fought without any deſign for Fightings ſake, without ever propoſing to himſelf a plauſible end of his Wars, or any tollerable Advantage, that could be call'd a Recompence for the Blood of his Brave Companions, and the prodigious Hazards and Fatigues he underwent himſelf: How it is poſſible, that ſuch a Man can be call'd a great General, that wanted two ſuch Eſſential Qualifications? If we may judge from probability, it was Ten times more owing to Fortune, than either his Valour or his Conduct, that he extended his Conqueſts ſo far as he did; for if Fifty *Alexanders* were to ſet out one after another, all with the ſame Advantages, it is odds but Nine and Forty of them would either be knock'd o' the Head, or meet with one *Boriſthenes* Buſineſs or other, before they came a tenth part of the way the *Macedonian* went; beſides, it is a great Weakneſs in a Princes Judgment, when without conſidering the Strength and Numbers of his own People, he would graſp what he cannot hold and pretends to Conqueſt more than he can Rule. If *Alexander* had lived, tho all his Natural Subjects had been Commanders, there would not have been enough to maintain his Conqueſts: His Actions were moſt of them glorious, but the Motive that ſpur'd him on to them, nothing but a boundleſs Ambition: No Benefit of his People, nor Welfare of the Publick, ſeems to have ever enter'd his Thoughts; all the end he had in Conquering was, that People ſhould ſay he had Conquer'd; his Weeping, that there were no more Worlds to overcome, was, in my Opinion, no wiſer Action than the crying of Children, when their Bellies are full, becauſe they can Eat no more. Some of his Virtues have received greater Applauſe than they deſerved, his great Continence for one; when the Beautiful Wife of *Darius* was made his Captive, it is not probable that ſhe had a great Inclination to the Man, that had reduc'd her and her Family to the utmoſt Miſery, and he could not have enjoy'd

joy'd her under a Rape: Muſt a Prince be ſo highly extoll'd for not being Miſcreant enough to Raviſh a Great Queen, when ſhe was in his Power, as *Alexander* is by his Hiſtorians upon that account? But if Love was a Paſſion that had ſo little Power over him, he was the leſs to be pardon'd, that by the Inſtigation of an Infamous Strumpet, he would burn one of the fineſt Cities of the World to Aſhes. How much was to be relied upon his Friendſhip we may judge from his killing the beſt of his Friends at the Table where he feaſted them; how refin'd his Notion was of Honour, appear'd, when rather than not be counted of Divine Extraction, he wou'd ſtain the Reputation of his Mother, by encouraging a Beaſtly Story, which he knew to be falſe.

When *Edward* the III. beſieged *Calis* after the Battle of *Creſſy*, and would put all the Citizens to the Sword, he was at laſt ſo far prevail'd upon, that if Six could be found that would lay down their Lives for the Preſervation of the City, he would ſpare the reſt of the Inhabitants: Upon this Six Voluntarily offer'd themſelves, who yet upon the Queen's Interceſſion had their Lives given them. Theſe Men were no Kings nor great Commanders, and conſequently as ſuch they could not vie with *Alexander*; but in the Action itſelf there was more Undauntedneſs, Gallantry, and true Magnimity, than the other has any to boaſt of. The People of *Athens* waging War with the *Peleponneſians*, were foretold by the Oracle, that they ſhou'd overcome their Enemies, if *Codrus*, the King of the *Athenians* was Slain in the Battel. The *Athenians*, to ſhew the great Eſteem they had of their King, and the Confidence they had in their own Valour, reſolv'd to Fight without him, and knowing his Bravery, put a Guard upon him, that he might not expoſe himſelf to any Danger: But unparallel'd *Codrus*, who reliſh'd nothing but the Publick Welfare, knowing the Price at which Victory was to be had, would not let his People want what he could procure them, ſlipt from his Guard, fought among the foremoſt, and gave ſo many Provocations to the Enemy, that he was ſucceſsfully kill'd, and his Mourning Subject got the Day.

If you conſider either the Greatneſs of that truly Heroick Action, or the Noble Principle that inſpired him, *Alexander* never did any thing that can be compared to it: The one to gain an empty Name for himſelf, was laviſh of the Lives of his Brave *Macedonians*, but the other made a Sacrifice of his own to render his *Athenians* glorious; and yet, *oh! Injuſtice of Common Fame*, vain *Alexander* is in every body's Mouth, and deſerving *Codrus* ſcarce remembred by any.

A Gentlewoman whoſe Anceſtors I fancy were not unknown to Sir *Jeffery Chaucer*, has deſired us to inſert the following Letter.

To the Honourable Society of Tatling Ladies.

'I Have acquir'd a pretty good Character in the World by my Diligence in my way already, but deſirous 'to be more Publick, I beg your Aſſiſtance. I have 'been a Sempſtreſs for ſome Years, not a Mile from '*Hercules Pillars Alley* near the *Temple* in *Fleet-ſtreet*, 'where I not only make Matches, but have always a 'breed of Young Girls, which as faſt as they grow 'Ripe, I diſpoſe of to the beſt Bidder. I have one 'now will in a very little time be Ripe. Pray let me 'be in your next *Tatler*, and you will infinitely ob'lige,

Dear Ladies,

Your much Admirer,

H. L.

ADVERTISEMENTS.

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*** A Brief Account of the Woollen Manufactory of England, with Relation to the Prejudice it receives by the Clandeſtine Exportation of Wool from Ireland into France. To which is added, an Appendix. Sold by Dryden Leach, in Elliot's Court, in the Little Old Baily.

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